

Hallmarks

Spring 1999



Hallmarks

General Editor: Lauren Gaffney

Layout Editor: Maria Gumina

Art Editor: Martha Grace Orman

Sara Beesley
Margo Martin
Andrea Mazer
Caroline Richardson
Rachel Worrell
Alyssa Abkowitz
Sarah Allen
Kate Berry
Megan Casey
Molly Kaplan
Anna Lappalainen
Betty Blake Elrod
Margaret Humbracht
Katie McKinley
Melissa Mosely
Alice Orman
Mary Cres Zsarwark

Sponsor: Anne Dolittle

Special Thanks to:

Katie Hill
Dr. Myers
Mr. Croker

Cover Art by: Margo Martin (12)

Back Cover Art by: Kate Souder (12)

Table of Contents

"The Dance" by Alice Orman.....	2
"The Old Man and the Crocus Flower" by Lauren Gaffney.....	2
"Marching" by Sarah Allen.....	4
"The Time of Hands" by Maria Gumina.....	5
"Stuck in a Stall" by Andrea Mazer.....	6
"Untitled" by Martha Grace Orman.....	6
"Red" by Rachel Worrell.....	8
"Singya" by Molly Kaplan.....	9
"Just for Tonight" by Lauren Gaffney.....	10
"I See" by Helen Martin.....	11
"Tangerine" by Alice Orman.....	13
"Missionary Home" by Lindsay Voigt.....	13
"My Room" by Andrea Mazer.....	14
"Liberation" by Lauren Trent.....	15
"(an e.e. cummings imitation)" by Lauren Gaffney.....	16
"Held by the Lord" by Helen Martin.....	17
"Oedipus Eyes" by Maria Gumina.....	18
"losing sleep" by Alice Orman.....	18
"Old Houses of Everlasting Joy" by Helen Martin.....	19
"Pillowtalk" by Megan Casey.....	21
"crossroads" by Martha Grace Orman.....	21

Art by:

Kerry Bartoe
 Sasha Chudacoff
 Fabienne Diskin
 Amanda Dixon
 Susan Harris
 Melinda Housholder
 Jessica Lunden
 Margo Martin
 Morgan Ogilvie
 Kate Souder
 Laurel Staples
 Rachel Worrell

The Dance

I can still feel the breeze on my skin
the kind that raises goosebumps
on the nape of your neck
while underneath there is still the warmth
of a sultry afternoon
wind blown hair and bikini tops
in the sweltering July heat
and the freedom to go anywhere, everywhere,
or nowhere at all

I can relive it so easily, this page in a book
with a special place
on the shelf of my life

we are on our way to the Texaco on the corner—
you for your pack of Camels, me for my French vanilla cappuccino
and Fleetwood Mac humming above the drone
of the '65 Nova

and it is days like these
with the rhythms we beat out
on dashboards, our language
that keeps me feeling
keeps us
alive.

I ache for the day when this can be more than a memory
when I can close my eyes and listen
to the hum of the music
to the drone of the Nova
and you and I will hold on to
what we have
and what we almost lost

Alice Orman (10)

The Old Man and the Crocus Flower

when hands listen
for the stars to set,
winds blow
to welcome new seasons
and time robs the wealthy man
who spends
old days remembering
fields of saffron

Lauren Gaffney (12)



Fabienne Diskin (11)

Marching

The sun lit a flame in the asphalt
beneath my feet and radiated warmth up
through my calves. Damp elbows and sweat-soaked backs
brushed mine as crowds shoved their way down the streets
of New York City. Energy pulsed
in the waves of faces I passed, thankful to be alive.

Even the hot dog venders seemed more alive
as they paced the weather-beaten asphalt
shouting above the traffic, temples pulsing,
sweat dripping. Men stuffed in tweed and stocks glanced up,
caught, for a moment, in the life of the streets.
I pushed on, then hearing a noise, glanced back.

There she lay, like a magnet, drawing me back.
At first I wondered if she was even alive --
her eyes stared at nothing. The moving streets
almost trampled her, pounding the asphalt
with their relentless marches. Up, down, up,
down, the beat echoing my heart pulsing

in my ears. The one sign of life was a small pulsing
at the base of her chapped throat. A knee hit my back
and I realized I was crouched there, right up
in her face, searching for some soul still alive,
still burning. But all I found was skin like asphalt,
coarse black hair, wind chapped cheeks, products of the street.

Near-carrion, dumped with her cup and trash bag on a street
corner in an indifferent world that pulsed
with poverty and crime. Even on the hot asphalt
she shivered slightly, the trash bag on her back
rustling with each jolt. I felt ashamed for being alive
in that world. I cursed myself for being caught up

in my happy oblivion. I coughed up
images of my life, the corners of my streets
back home -- kids with lemonade stands, alive
in a world of hot dogs, scraped knees, pulsing
not with poverty, but with family TV and back
yard football and smooth, newly laid asphalt.

Finally I stood up, rejoining the pulsing
streets. I dropped a few coins in her cup, turned my back,
glaringly alive, and joined the pounding march on asphalt.

Sarah Allen (11)

The Time of Hands

Holidays have passed through these hands —
hands thick with time and blood made of aged
wine waiting to collapse into the sand
and dust and enter the body of the sage
land which waits also; hands made fresh
by unclenching, dropping the rope and the rock,
loosening the frantic grasp; hands with hard flesh
and soft, smooth or dusted with hair, stained and pocked
or plump and virginal, light or tanned, warm
or cold; hands wearing rings or grooves where rings used
to lay or both; hands out of paintings, perfect and calm,
next to irregular hands misshapen and bruised,
misused or unused out of pride or fear —
passed through and returned for another year.

Maria Gumina (12)



Kerry Bartoe (11)

Stuck in a Stall

My bones inside my skin ache from the monotony of trying to get out of here. Being stuck inside a three by three room is as bad as my baby sister barfing all over me. The airplane bathroom is not a place I want to be in for more than 30 seconds, or however long it takes me to pee. The door is jammed and I'm slightly embarrassed about banging on it to get everyone's attention that the passenger in seat 13A is stuck inside the occupied lavatory. I wonder if I'll ever make it out of here. I wonder if people will notice how long I've been gone. You stupid lock! I bet some soap might loosen you up, or maybe it will just rust you and make my situation worse.

I picture it now: Everyone watching the stewardess in the back trying to get the fourteen year old child out of the bathroom, and they all stare and snicker when I have to stay here until we land and they can then take the door off its hinges.

And what will my mother say? My entire family will make fun of me for eternity! At the dinner table they'll all sit around, with my father at the head, laughing and poking fun at my expense. And of course our destination is a family reunion, so the story of poor little Audrey stuck in the bathroom stall will be replayed over and over again.

Ok, ok, my situation is never going to get better unless I at least try to bang on the door and get someone's attention to let them know that I am stuck in here with the blue water resting in the silver bowl. I'll just hit it a little I guess. Pat, pat, pat, BANG!

"Get me out of here!" I yell as I find myself rolling out of the tiny stall in the back of the plane.

So now that I'm out of the restroom and none of my visions of rescue will come true, I'll be made fun of just as bad as if everything had gone according to my imagination. At the dinner table, and the family reunion, and I'm sure my wedding and my baby sister's wedding, basically for the rest of my life, the story of me trapped in the bathroom stall will be replayed. Back to row 13 seat A I must go.

Andrea Mazer (12)

Untitled

I had this brown dress once, the kind with no sleeves but wide straps that could support my top half in a flattering fashion. It was simple, deep rust-colored flowers splashed across a white background, light green stems intertwined to make snaky loops. The hem was crooked, longer in the back than in the front, and I was always tugging at the seams to straighten it. I wore that dress to the pool one day, and my hair made wet stains down my brown back. I remember how my boyfriend wouldn't kiss me that day, and I cried in that dress. I wore it to my first appointment with a new therapist, twisting the slippery material between my fingers while he recommended wilderness rehab to my parents. I hated in that dress. I wore it to church in Monteagle one Sunday morning, tracing the pattern of floral and eyeing that tall boy across the aisle in the sixth row. I desired in that dress. And two months ago, I found my brown dress in the depths of my closet. It was different. When I traced the patterns, the material was coarse and stiff, not silky. I held it up to the lamp, but there was no radiance, no reflection of light from the once-glossy surface. The rusty-brown tones had turned to rust when the dry cleaners stole the life of my dress. And I thought of you, the way you glistened at first sight, created permanent memories, stole my heart. You were smooth between my fingers once. So I think we had love in some form at some point. It's just changing its appearance.

Martha Grace Orman (12)



Morgan Ogilvie (12)

Red

Erect posture red in the firelight holds out palms full of candles
red red flames leap from the hands of the girl
the girl with the hollow eyes and blanched skin.

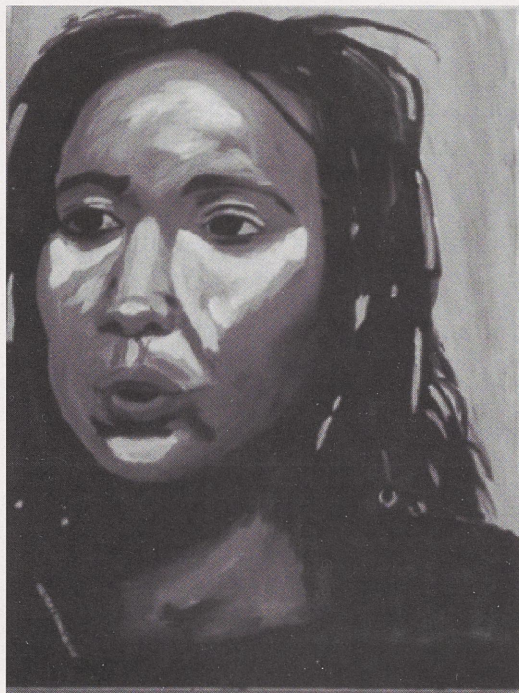
Red hair drips from the top of her scalp
flows down rapidly towards her skirt
red stained by the surrounding firelight.

Her palms waver, the candles drop to the ground,
Liquid fire spreads
red red is the ground now.

A circle of flames radiates from her long body.
A breeze lights and the grass begins to crackle. The fires' flood begins to diminish red
amber is all that is left

and a little girl who isn't so red and little now is not left. Little to huge is she.
Her now red skin is polished in the sunshine and glows with fire trapped inside.
Her arms are now permanently up and her erect posture is forever red.

Rachel Worrell (12)



Rachel Worrell (12)

Singya

Need you be satisfied by anonymity?
Softly speaking covers shrieking,
and you never think I can hear.
Or see, for that matter, the changing of your voice.
You beat drums loudly, causing a disturbed contusion,
and forcing all eyes around you to shut.
And run, maybe, as you might wish.
Consuming thoughts may cover your body and take you away,
but I could recognize your flesh, deprived at times,
malnourished with lack of feeling,
through the most erratic of thoughts.
A tiger's biting stripes; the back and forth of your eyes;
both reminders of a fate to be had.
Unwanted desire comes again,
mingling in your shadows is sin well hidden in the darkness of the room.
Only sounds can comfort you now and purging tears, too pious to drink, too stubborn to
talk, the notes overtake you.
Yet you write them off before you even know they are there.
You've done wrong, brother.

I know how wishful thinking has driven you mad.
Erudition may have made you learned,
but scholarly wisdom cannot fill these desires for tranquility
You say everyone's conception of reality,
of true mentality,
has never spoken to you.
Still, you fight for ideals, scorning the military, jesting angrily at the monetary,
shaking your fist at cruel intentions.
Balancing your apathy and need for poetic justice weighs me down,
for we have shared *singya*,
and my eyes are forced to look.
Eyes do play tricks;
I know yours play the cruelest of sorts.
You want to see, brother
but you cannot hear,
And the sounds mute out, when you are finally ready to listen.

Molly Kaplan (11)



Susan Harris (12)

Just for Tonight

Jumping in muddy puddles
Diving in chilly pools
Leaping gin bottles
And laughing fools

Fallen needy gentlemen
Singing innocent girls
Collapsing clothing
And torn away pearls

Sleeping ceaseless fires
Resting heads of curls
Broken bottle glass
And tomorrow their separate worlds

Lauren Gaffney (12)

I see

I see
Childish innocence
She tries to cover
Visible only to me
I am constantly amazed
She changes day
To day

Our rare visits
Slowly becoming more distant
Each time our arms embrace
Another piece of her
Is lost

Her actions
Serve as a blanket
Covering the soul only
I still know
Since our first peek
At the unfamiliar world
Our sides seldom part

Today
Across from her
Her new car our umbrella to the rain
She appears differently
Heavy makeup
Distorts her familiar face

The love of her
Admiration and understanding
Comes too quickly
Replaced by happiness
Only
I see
Through

Helen Martin (10)



Melinda Housholder (11)

Tangerine

Meticulously I wiped away the sweetly spilled juice,
my hand now sticky and orange stained.
I thought of the succulent tangerine I had savored moments before;
how its juices trickled along the thin frame of my throat
feeding an addiction like wine for the raging alcoholic.
And there were others: golden and round, red delicious, and unripened green
the myriad of colors reminded me of myself as a giddy child
running wild in a field of September sunflowers,
entangling myself in their dance like a crowd of children
And I could never be drawn away then; here I found my peace.
Now, as I stared so intensely at those colors,
I wondered why they had such life
in them
And where my life had gone

Alice Orman (10)

Missionary Home

Old House. Washer and dryer: 1980. Telephone: 1981. Television: nineteen-ninety-never. Air conditioning: no, thanks. The squeaky old-lady voice of the porch swing sings during quiet hour as the cousins doze upstairs and Aunt Betsy smocks a dress and Mom knits a sweater and I try to do some summer reading, but I can't, because I'm so in love with the sticky-hot humid summer air and the ceiling fan on full blast that tries to make it go away, and the mildewy old mattress of my bed and the ugly Umbros and stinky Tevas I wear every day and no one cares, and the sea-green staircase with bald spots where foot after foot has stepped or jumped -- the kitchen table is ugly, too, and it might even fall apart soon, but that's OK because I still have 11 cousins and 3 aunts and 3 uncles and 2 parents and 2 brothers and 2 grandparents who I know would all be more than glad to sit around the kitchen floor in a circle and eat with me anyway.

The glider bumps against the wall on the front porch when you rock on it too hard, "crickey, clunk . . . clunk . . . clunk" -- the "crickey" being someone sitting down and the "clunk," the motion of their legs pushing the glider in rhythm, even as a drum, as the tall, sweaty glass of lemonade makes a puddle on the table and cracks the chipping paint a little more.

The bathtub has feet, you know. I mean those ball things being gripped by talons. When Mom was my age, they painted all the furniture in 60's-olive-green-with-orange-flowers. It didn't get repainted till three years ago when Mom erased her own mistake and painted the tub white. If you look under the edge of the left side, three-fourth of the way back, under the lip that curls out, there is my handprint at age fourteen in white paint (but don't tell Mom).

My window upstairs looks out on Juanita's front porch. If I move the head of my bed one-foot from the wall, I can perch on my headboard and look down at the street where bikes with little kids go flying by, and grandmothers stroll together, and Craig lopes on home just in time to make curfew. My window is my radio at night, and my symphony is tree frogs and grasshoppers I just can't sleep with out my music. And speaking of, did I tell you about the gravel footsteps up to the stone stairs and the wheezing screen porch door? That song means somebody's home. And now that you mention it, I think that person might just be . . . me.

Lindsay Voigt (12)

My Room

My room has a smell of chocolate mixed with fermented bread funk. As I scatter opened candy wrappers and dirty work clothes into her soul, she retains the smell. My room has been watching me for sixteen years now. She is my pink sanctuary I use as escape, and she is my comfort zone.

I first moved in to escape the demons down the hall who were merely figments of my imagination. I believed the fairy tale monsters in the books my mom had read to me were crawling out of the pages and hiding in the air conditioning vents till dusk. I switched rooms with one of my two elder sisters, so I could share a room with one of them in order to keep safe. Eventually my big sister got sick of her timid little roommate. I then received a new pal to share my pink home with; she was far more obnoxious than I could have ever been.

Soon the house began to empty, and my room did as well. Two bigger and brighter sisters had left, allowing me to become more intimate in my holy place. My kid sister had gone down the hall to play with the evil spirits, as I once did, leaving me to make faces in my mirror. To the world I hid every emotion found in the dictionary, tricking myself into being a fictional indestructible character. My room was not a judge. Her telescope eyes were the only ones who could see me, and I opened up to her.

The pink palace has always been watching me. She has observed me storming in after a huge fight—a fight which was caused by my foolish teenage mind thinking it's always right. She listened to my laughter while I conversed with a friend over the phone; when I cried about a lost friend; or when I sang out my favorite song blasting on the stereo. She wished me well when I left for a journey to another continent, and when I returned she welcomed me home. Her shelter protected me as I waltzed in from a day's work at the bakery only hoping for a few minutes of peace.

My body has aged walking through my gateway to Eden, and her walls have grown with me. My face in the mirror has changed, but she stays constant. She stares as I've left and come in exhilarated from an election win for my youth group, vulnerable before my first day at a new school my Junior year, or weary from a late night out.

My pink paradise smells like me. There are unopened books on the history of horses and vintage books about the philosophy of Taoism. Hidden under the sagging bed are broken cassette cases replaced by CDs of the next generation. My green bathrobe two sizes too small is hung on the door, while the clothes sleep in the closet. The pictures of summer camp friends peek out of a drawer and see their reflection on the bulletin board walls. The once read mail whispers something to them from the desk, and my multi-colored sunglasses dangling from the mirror giggle with the multitudes of headband resting against the angelic white carpet. Sweaty sports clothes overflow the hamper in the corner. They all add to the pervading smell of Andrea in my room.

My room, she is where I turn to get away. To her I am not mysterious, witty, or proud. To her I am a wisher, a believer. Tonight as I fall into her arms she'll cradle me and watch me dream.

Andrea Mazer (12)

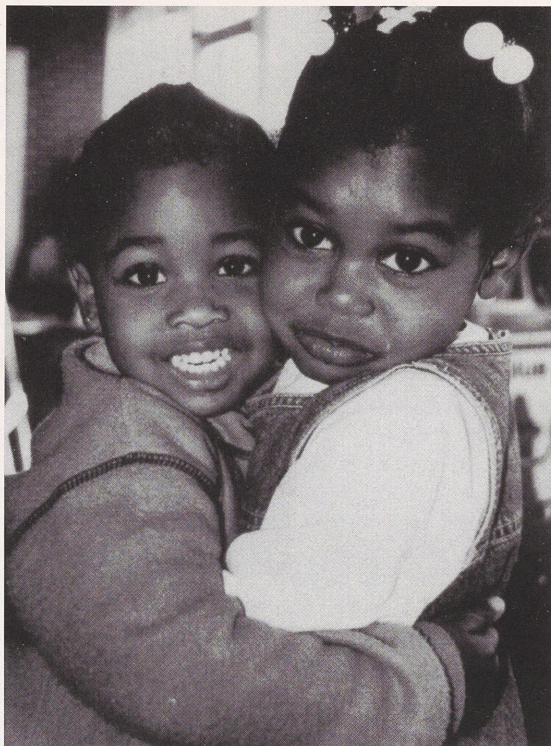


Laurel Staples (11)

Liberation

Called to, a thousand times, I never looked back.
I walked with my head held high,
 nose pointed up.
My stride was long and confident.
My shoulders rotated front to back and
 my arms swayed like pendulums on either side
 counting the seconds.
Not a thing could stop me.
Not a beg or a plead,
and definitely not the nagging voices.
They swallowed me with things to do.
I had to break free from the haunting calls.
Over and over they repeated the same lines
as if in a chant.
But,
with every step I took,
they faded.
They faded like the end of an echo,
the night at dawn, and
the bend in a curve.
They faded with every crunch of the gravel
and every breath I took....

Lauren Trent (10)



Sasha Chudacoff (11)

(an e.e. cummings imitation)

i wish to account for grumpy old age; its
countless affairs with the
hims and hers (how it
silences

if their lover lie anywhere near) while She and He
were falling
far beyond any sacred beds and vows
and fears (time too loves

passion) of being caught. these
nights that light (They remember it
as) The Day flesh got and lost
what Their minds will always hold

(as fresh nightmarish guilt
to haunt all of their Today's)

Lauren Gaffney (12)

Held by the Lord

I used to sit. Under a special tree. Skirting a still creek. My initials carved deep. Into the scratchy bark. A million rocks of anger. Lie at the bottom of the still bed.

I would sit under the shading branches. And pray. Talk to the lord. Ask him what he wanted to tell me each visit. I always forgot. To listen. I remember. I would spend hours there. My Bible, a pen, and my God.

I haven't been. In weeks now. The hike seems unworthy. Of the few calories. I have to burn. The tree doesn't call me. Anymore.

The last time I went. I cried.

I sat there alone. This time. Too angry. With whoever was watching over me. Too disgusted with myself. The fall sun beat. Against my fatigued legs. The tree. No longer shaded me. It had lost too many leaves. To the greedy wind. So underneath my feet. Lie the leaves. From my special tree. I didn't even bother. To think about opening my ears to God. Until...

*i felt his presence
i heard his sandal covered feet
the wind carried his voice to my unopened ears*

*i saw his reflection in my anger-filled creek
i heard faintly the sound of my name from his healing lips
his head peeked from behind the slender trees*

*i turned my head away
i stare at the ground
not allowing myself to meet his watchful gaze*

*i turn back slowly guilt my only reason to peek
he had vanished
no longer did my name leak from his lips*

*i still felt his arms though
they were wrapped tightly around my body
shielding me from the world I feared*

*i think about that day often
i remain curious about what it felt like
i have closed my ears completely since then*

*too angry
too selfish
to give faith a chance*

*i've heard the stories
his healing and
undying love*

*where was he the first time
i cried
where was he the day
my grandpa died*

*i used to claim nothing would keep me away from my Lord
today i look back
i envy that innocence
and laugh at the immaturity of my old belief*

*these days
i pray to nature
my special tree
my still creek
my fall air*

*maybe someday
the same tree with the initials carved neatly
and the creek with my anger stones thrown deep
will call my name again*

*till then
i will remember
what it felt like
to be*

held by the lord

Helen Martin (10)

Oedipus Eyes

even the whites of their eyes are black — black syrup
with the taste of licorice; I am in a garden of licorice atop a mountain
and sticky clammy strips coldly mop my cheek and slither

around my neck and my broken collar bone.
Bruised bones and bony veins decorate my face,
but like enlightened Oedipus my eyes belong to the garden.

They used to be slick marbles, hard like the soapstone
vase I tried to give away until it cracked and all
I wanted was to protect it unconditionally

from grubby hands and dirty smiles and licorice
eyes that always want more more than they can get
or I could give or anyone would even want

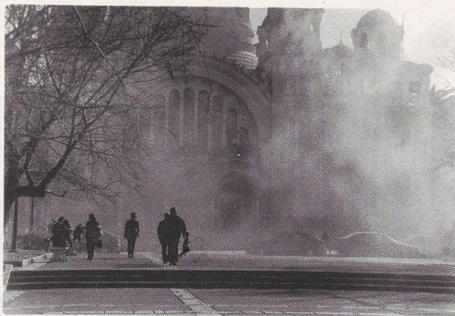
if they could see from the other side — my side — but then
the mountain is too steep to go down and they ask for answers
and don't know how mirror clear and plain it is, how easy to see
if your eyes aren't made of licorice.

Maria Gumina (12)

losing sleep

on mornings when I wake
with the scent of yellow light spilling into my room
filtering through worn shades
leaving the night in shadows I abandon my warmth of flannel beneath a cocoon of downy
dreams
pour my coffee with already expired skim milk, settled on the kitchen counter at 7:22 a.m.
because there is no way of escaping this disease that chases me like a fury in the night
even still, there is no way out of buying a book just to flip quietly through the pages
smelling the scent of the glossy, new paper
because someday you might cross paths with the soul mate your fortune teller predicted
at the State Fair on your sixteenth birthday.
Bumping shoulders in an overcrowded subway headed north to 4th and Broad
only now you don't believe in fate
but you don't pray to God either
and you sure as hell don't eat chocolate cake for dessert
you no longer binge on life's little pleasures, at least
not on a day when the forecast promised cloudless, blue skies
and you are still stuck on a subway that can't find its way to Broad

Alice Orman (10)



Jessica Lunden (11)

Old Houses of Everlasting Joy

each swing
each bench
each screened-in porch
tells a secret

summer kisses
scraped knees
loving hugs

each flower

each tree

each blade of grass

has seen a story created

childhood heroes
late night games
lasting friendships

freedom woven into each memory
innocence bundled in each breath

generation after generation
we watch ourselves

learning from each other
changing together

new laughs
discover the unity of our playground

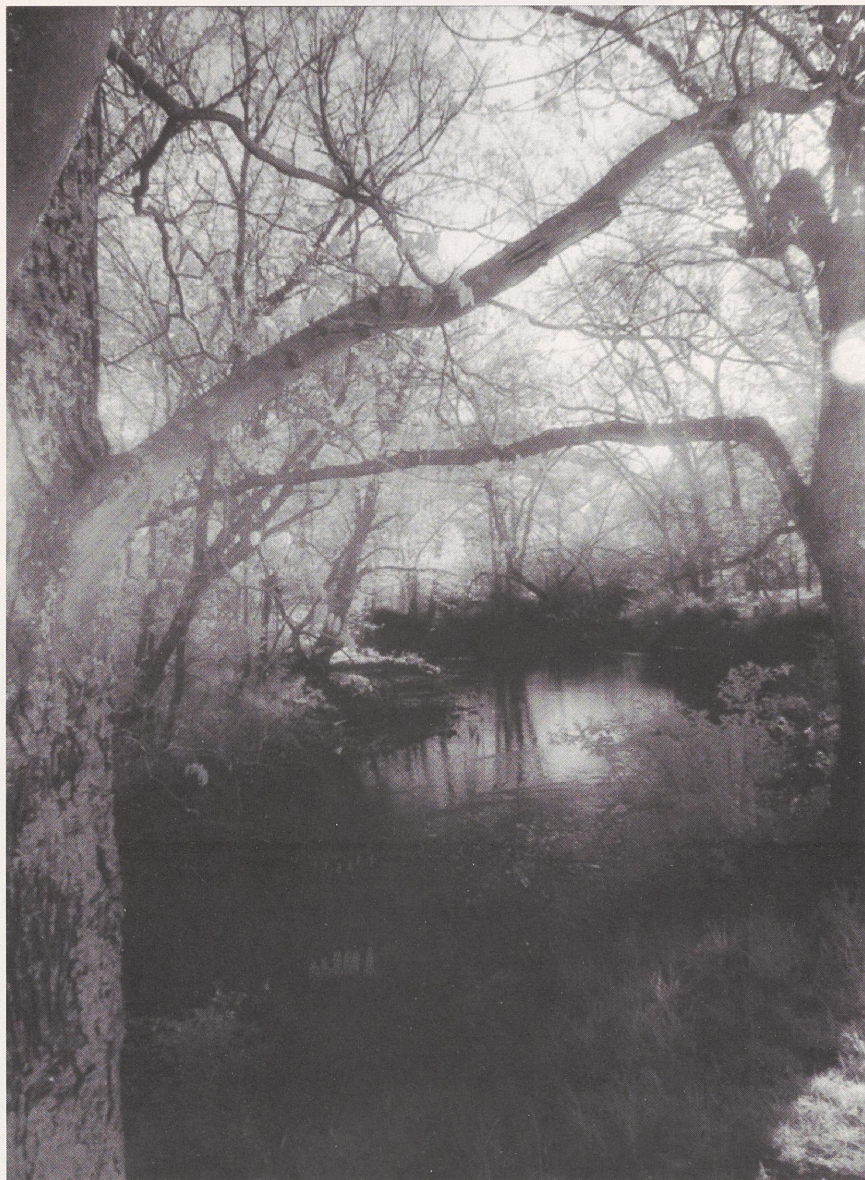
understanding our bond
creating joy of their own

alone on this bench
their smiles shine bright in my head
their presence still lurks in my heart

the sound of the ancient trees
the smell of the fall mountain air
allows us to be

a family
letting others know
undisguised souls

Helen Martin (10)



Amanda Dixon (12)

Pillowtalk

We soothed down into each other
And my belly filled with butterflies
Like the first time we kissed --
Not weak knees; weak belly
Dark velvet strands fell to your forehead
You stared at me and said I was beautiful
You trusted my thoughts, my soul
Not my pale eyes with long lashes
Or my long waves of hair
You admired my chipmunk cheeks
And loved to pinch my pudgy back
Lying there
Our thoughts sung softly between us
Eye matched eye
Knee met knee
And hand kissed hand
Lying there, watching
Strands of your hair on my pillow
And the light on your face
That is how I knew

Megan Casey (11)

Crossroads

we faced backwards
eyes spiraling and curving
with the vehicle
it was we three
felt like me and you
as you stretched your arm out
to tickle my ear
push the hair from my flushed face
soothe the tightening knot inside
I wrote messages
in the steam of the windows
and you talked
with your bright stony eyes
through the smoky reflection
it was a nice ride

Martha Grace Orman (12)

